

According to figures from the CSO**, the average age of first-time mothers in Ireland has increased over the last 30 years by almost five years or 18% from 26 years and four months in 1988 to 31 years and one month in 2018.

Ms. Murphy commented,

“The CSO figures show a steady increase in the age that women are having their first child in Ireland. It looks like as each decade passes, the average age for first-time mothers increases by around a year.

“In the case for waiting to start a family, the survey points to a major fall-off after age 36 – with just 3% of people (women 2%: men 5%) overall saying it would be their ideal age to start a family. Of course, these are average findings and there’s no doubt that many people’s ideal age to start a family will be higher than age 36. Among the youngest cohort of respondents (18-34), there was a mixed attitude towards the ideal age, with 55% favouring starting a family by 30, and 45% after 30.”

The Royal London survey revealed that at the other end of the spectrum, more men than women felt that having a family at a young age was a good idea. *11% of men compared to 6% of women thought starting a family under 25 would be the ideal scenario.*

Ms. Murphy went on to say,

“There is also a significant difference between Dublin-based respondents and those in Munster, with five times more people in Munster (16%) than Dublin (3%) believing that starting a family under 25 is the ideal option.”

ENDS

Sources

* Eurostat, March 2019: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Fertility_statistics#Total_fertility_rate_and_age_of_women_at_birth_of_first_child

** CSO Births by State, Year and Statistic 2018, , 2008, 1998,1988
<https://www.cso.ie/px/pxeirestat/Statire/SelectVarVal/Define.asp?maintable=VSA17&PLanguage=0>

Notes to the Editor:

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